

ADDRESS

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OF THE

EASTERN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE

STATE ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY,

TO THE

CITIZENS OF PENNSYLVANIA.

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By a resolution adopted at the last session of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, during the memorable week just elapsed, the Executive Committee of the Eastern District was instructed to address the public in relation to the events which led to the adjournment of the Society before the completion of the business which had been presented to it. In discharging the duty thus laid upon them, the Committee have prepared the following statement of facts, which with the comments suggested by them, are commended to the careful perusal and attentive consideration of the people of Pennsylvania.

In pursuance of a regular call from the Executive Committee, the Society was convened in Philadelphia on the 16th inst. at the Pennsylvania Hall, a splendid building which had just been added to the architectural decorations of our city, and but two days before been opened, and dedicated to Free Discussion. Our hearts were cheered with the fact, that here, in a city where we had so long sought in vain for a convenient place in which to plead for the oppressed, and vindicate the rights of the poor, men of various opinions on political, religious and moral questions—on that of slavery and its proper remedy, among others—had erected a noble edifice which was at once an ornament to the city, and a refuge for the spirit of Liberty, an arena where mind might freely grapple with mind, and, to use the language of Jefferson, even “error of opinion might be tolerated, while reason was left free to combat it.” We rejoiced, for we felt confident that our principles in the fair field of open argument, must triumph and prevail; and that we needed, therefore, but an opportunity to bring them fully before the minds of the people, to ensure the eventual approbation and co-operation of all whose favor and aid are truly desirable. We had attended the previous meetings of the week, and witnessed the solemnities of the dedication, by which the Hall was consecrated to Freedom, and we felt it in our hearts, while we gave thanks to Freedom’s God for what our ears heard and our eyes saw, to congratulate our fellow citizens that they were the first to found a building specially designed for the free expression of opinion on every controverted subject.

Of such events of the week as preceded our meeting, we should say nothing, were it not that they are all so closely connected with each other and with the final catastrophe, as to render it necessary to the full understanding of the portion more particularly coming under our cognizance as the organ of the State Society, that a brief recital should be given. On the morning, then, of the 14th inst., a vast concourse of people of the

city and adjacent country assembled at the first opening of the newly finished Hall, and as soon as the meeting was called to order, the Secretary of the Board of Managers of the building made a concise statement of the purposes for which it was erected. Of this statement we here insert a copy.

"A number of individuals of all sects, and those of no sect,—of all parties, and those of no party—being desirous that the citizens of Philadelphia should possess a room, wherein the principles of *Liberty*, and *Equality of Civil Rights*, could be freely discussed, and the evils of slavery fearlessly portrayed, have erected this building, which we are now about to dedicate to Liberty and the Rights of Man. The total cost of the building will be about 40,000 dollars. This has been divided into two thousand shares of twenty dollars each. A majority of the stockholders are mechanics, or working men, and (as is the case in almost every other good work,) a number are females.

The building *is not to be used for anti-slavery purposes alone*. It will be rented from time to time, in such portions as shall best suit applicants, for *any purpose not of an immoral character*. It is called "*Pennsylvania Hall*," in reference to the principles of Pennsylvania: and our Motto, like that of the commonwealth, is

**"VIRTUE, LIBERTY AND INDEPENDENCE."**

After the reading of letters from several individuals of note, in different parts of the country, the dedicatory address, an eloquent effort of a gifted mind, was pronounced by one of our distinguished citizens. His manly advocacy of sound principles—even though marred as we could not but think it, by some remarks near his conclusion, which were inconsistent with the main tenor of his discourse, certainly ought not to have rendered either him or the place in which he spoke obnoxious to violence.

The exercises of the afternoon and evening—lyceum addresses and discussions, and the advocacy of the cause of temperance by one of our fellow citizens, and an eminent champion of that good cause from a sister state, and that too, a slaveholding state, furnished an exemplification of the principles of impartial freedom, on which the management of the Hall was to be conducted. On the next day, an appropriate dedicatory poem was recited, copies of which are already in the hands of hundreds, and may be of hundreds more, if they choose to procure them, and ascertain whether the effusion contains any just provocation to outrage. The importance and rightfulness of free discussion were then set forth by one speaker, and an appeal in behalf of the American Aborigines was made by another. Strange, indeed, may we well think it, if either of these topics should excite the ire of Philadelphians. In the afternoon, the Lyceum again occupied the building, and in the evening another champion for free discussion appeared in the person of a distinguished member of our state Legislature, and the right of petition was maintained by Alvan Stewart, of New York. On the morning of the 16th, at eight o'clock, the State Society met, appointed its committees, made arrangements for its subsequent sessions, and at ten gave way for the commencement of a full and free discussion of slavery, emancipation, whether immediate or gradual, colonization, and all other topics connected with these. This discussion had been announced on the previous day, and to it had been invited the advocates of

every possible variety of sentiment on the subjects mentioned—slaveholders, colonizationists, gradualists, immediatists, friends and foes, and neutrals, and middle ground men, if any such there are. Could any thing more be reasonably demanded by the most strenuous defender of slavery itself, or of any practice or doctrine, which, as abolitionists, we oppose? And is not the measure finally adopted by our opponents, conclusive evidence, under these circumstances, that slavery can never endure the light, but must perish under the scorching rays of free investigation; and that the various schemes resorted to for palliating its evils, and gradually effecting its abolition, are in the same condemnation?

The discussion of Wednesday morning, it is true, was nearly all on one, and that on the right side, but it was only because the champions of error shrunk from the contest—not because a fair field was not offered them.

A second session of the State Society occupied the first two hours of the afternoon, and the remainder was devoted by a very numerous auditory, to hearing from Alvan Stewart a calm and dispassionate address on slavery.

Before proceeding further, it may be proper to fall back in order of time, and mention that on the 15th, a large and highly respectable Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women, had assembled in the session room of the Hall, in pursuance of an adjournment from last spring; and that the occasion had brought together many of the noblest minds, and of the best and purest hearts among the women of our country,—minds capable of grasping, with prevailing strength, subjects of a magnitude and difficulty, which masculine vigor would deem it an honor to master,—and hearts that, while they could melt and bleed for human woe, could also dare high things for the promotion of human happiness, and beat with calm and even pulse in the presence of danger, encountered in the path of duty. A strong desire had been expressed by many in the city, to hear some of these able pleaders for the cause of truth and humanity; and it was arranged that on the evening of the 16th, a meeting should be held, at which some of our devoted sisters, as well as some of our own sex, should speak for the suffering and the dumb. Notice was accordingly given to that effect, and the name of a daughter of Carolina, too well known to need a repetition here, was announced among those of the expected speakers. Before the appointed hour had arrived, the large saloon, capable of containing more than three thousand people, was closely and compactly crowded, from the platform to the remotest corners of the galleries; every seat filled, every aisle densely thronged, every inch of space apparently occupied. It is proper to state that this meeting was not under the direction of the Managers of the Hall, or of the State Society.

Threats of violence had been thrown out during the day, but it was hard to believe that our hitherto orderly city could be made the theatre of mob-outrage, and we had repaired to the place of convocation, trusting that these menaces were but idle

breath, to which no attempt would be made to give a substantial body. Even the written placard, which had been posted about the streets, inviting to interference, *forcible, if necessary*, and calling for an assemblage at the Hall on Wednesday morning, to "demand the immediate dispersion of the Convention," was looked upon, rather as an ebullition of the malice, folly, and wickedness of a few, or perhaps a single person, than as a cause of alarm for our personal safety, the quiet of our meeting, or the tranquillity of the city. The time fixed by the placard for an unlawful assemblage, had passed without a response to the incendiary call, and our confidence in the peaceable disposition of the inhabitants of Philadelphia, and their respect for the reputation of their city, had up to this time remained unshaken.

The exercises of the evening were commenced by a short address from Wm. L. Garrison, after which Maria W. Chapman was introduced to the audience; but before she could step forward to the desk, a loud yell from without proclaimed the presence of a disorderly rabble in the streets, and such was the tumult which ensued, augmented by several voices within the Hall, that her brief remarks were lost by all except a few of the thousands present.

She was followed by our sister from the South, who, with deep solemnity of manner, and with words of weight and power, gave her impressive testimony against that institution of complicated wickedness, which, as a native of a slave state, and long a resident in the midst of slavery, she has had such full opportunities for observing, and such ample means of thoroughly understanding. The commotion without still continued, waxing louder and more turbulent at each successive shout, and at length the crashing of glass, mingled with the cries of the mob, as stones were hurled against the windows, on every accessible side of the building. Through all this wild tumult, the speaker held on her course, undaunted and unmoved, availing herself as she went on, of the very circumstances of seeming discouragement by which she was surrounded, to enforce her appeals, and point her arguments, and bring more closely home, the truths she uttered to the understanding and conscience of all who could hear her. These, notwithstanding the din and clamor which shut out her voice from many eagerly listening ears, constituted a large portion of the assembly. Short addresses were made by two or three others after she had closed; and at the usual hour the meeting was dismissed, and the people quietly dispersed. Thus far the rioters were completely defeated in their main design, of breaking up the assembly in confusion—but it was not for want of violent exertions on their part. By cries of fire, by yells and screams, and a variety of appalling sounds—by making occasionally a tumultuous rush, as if to break furiously into the saloon, they endeavored to terrify the congregation, and effect its precipitate dispersion; but though two or three times, in the earlier part of the disturbance, a momentary alarm overspread the house, and brought many to their feet as if to leave, yet under the efforts of the friends of order, this soon subsided, and at length the

steady calmness and cool composure of the speakers seemed to have diffused itself extensively among the audience, and tranquilized its brief agitation. Most resumed their seats, and comparatively few retired before the dismissal of the meeting.

While the assembly was retiring, and after it had completely dispersed, the mob in a dense mass still occupied the streets, and discharged several volleys of stones at the windows. A number of colored persons, as they came out, were brutally assaulted, and one, at least, was severely injured. During the riotous proceedings of this evening, several constables, as we are credibly informed, were on the ground, but under express orders from the city solicitor to attempt no arrests.

How long the lawless concourse remained together, we are unable to say ; but when the meeting of Thursday morning was convened, the building was surrounded by groups of persons, whose appearance and conversation indicated no good intentions or peaceable designs. This assemblage, fluctuating, doubtless, and changing more or less in its constituent parts as some retired and others supplied their places, continued to hold its station through the whole day, but without attempting any outrage, or doing more than to offer occasional insults to some of those who were passing to and from the meetings within.

The session room was occupied at eight in the morning, by a convention which had been called to devise means for the encouragement of requited labor ; and at ten the Convention of American Women assembled in the saloon. The same Conventions met in the saloon in the afternoon—one at two o'clock and the other at four ; the session of the latter continuing until about sunset. The evening was to have been occupied by a public meeting of the Wesleyan Anti-Slavery Society of the M. E. Church of Philadelphia, at which a preacher of that denomination, distinguished for his able advocacy of human rights, was expected to speak.

The Board of Managers of the Hall had deemed it their duty, in the morning of this day, to communicate to the Mayor of the city, and the Sheriff of the county, information of the preceding evening's outrage, and of the arrangement for the coming afternoon and evening meetings, as well as of those expected on the subsequent days of the week ; and to call on these officers for that protection which their official obligations required them to render. The communications to which we allude, have already been made public by the Board of Managers, together with the replies of the Mayor and Sheriff, the latter of whom stated that all the force he had at command consisted of three men, with whom of course he could do nothing, but that his personal, official, and moral influence should be exerted for the suppression of disorder ; while the former promised to go and *make a speech* to the mob, but said he could do nothing more. It should not be forgotten that this is the same man, who, last year, at a time when no mob was in existence, upon the bare apprehension that a meeting of one of the political parties, called to convene in Independence Square and express opinions unfavorable to the banks, might result in riotous conduct which would endanger the pro-

perty of those corporations, took vigorous measures of prevention ; putting the police in readiness for prompt action, and even, if we are correctly informed, placing the military under arms, and stationing them in such points as it was conjectured might require their presence for the maintenance of tranquillity. We mention this fact, as an evidence of what are the Mayor's own notions of his duty when the peace of the city is supposed to be in peril.

To return to our narrative : as the day rolled on, the indications of approaching violence became more and more alarming—the crowd around the devoted building grew more dense and more excited ; busy agents of mischief were passing from group to group, circulating falsehoods and calumnies against the abolitionists, and inflaming passions which even now needed allaying—citizens of other states, slaveholders actual and slaveholders expectant, mingled in the mass, to leaven it yet more thoroughly with a spirit of reckless desperation, and increase its already over-abundant fermentation and effervescence ; while so far as we could discern, little or nothing was done by those whose official duty was the preservation of peace, to avert the coming storm. On the contrary we have strong reasons for believing that the previous course of the Mayor had a tendency to encourage violence, and invite aggression upon the rights of a portion of his constituents.

Some of these reasons will appear as we proceed. Nor is it the least painful circumstance in connection with these transactions, that men of standing and respectability, substantial merchants, and influential citizens, so far from expressing their decided and heart-felt abhorrence of the threatened outrage, and exerting their influence to calm the excitement, to maintain inviolate the rights of their fellow citizens, and preserve unsullied the reputation of their city ; either looked on in cold indifference, or as was in many instances the case, expressed both in language and action their unequivocal approbation and encouragement.

A few minutes before the appointed hour of the evening meeting, several persons repaired to the Hall for the purpose of attending it, but found the door closed and locked. It was soon ascertained that the Mayor had requested of the Board of Managers, the keys of the building, promising if they were given into his possession, that he would take upon himself the responsibility of protecting the building, which otherwise he said he could not do, and that the managers had complied with his request. Of course all idea of holding the intended meeting was abandoned. But the mob did not abandon *their* design.

The Mayor, according to his morning promise, appeared in front of the building, and made them a speech—in which he expressed the *hope* that nothing of a disorderly nature would be done, stated that the house had been given up to him for the night, and that there would be no meeting, that he *relied on them as his police*, and trusted they would abide by the laws and keep order ; and then concluded by wishing them good evening.



The mob responded with "three cheers for the Mayor," and he withdrew, leaving them neither dispersed nor pacified.

It is understood that the Mayor subsequently returned, but it was then too late for an efficient exertion of his authority. The rioters had commenced their work. The gas lights in front of the Hall were extinguished, and an impetuous onset made, first upon the north and then upon the eastern side.

The Sheriff's efforts, as every one must have anticipated in such circumstances, were of no avail, and his call on the miscellaneous crowd for that assistance, which on other occasions would probably have been ensured by efficient measures beforehand, was equally unsuccessful. After some strenuous, but fruitless efforts, therefore, to stem the swelling torrent, he also withdrew, and the object of attack was left wholly at the mercy of the passion-maddened, and doubtless rum-inflamed assailants. From the cries with which they cheered each other on, it was manifest that they regarded the city authorities as willing, if not desirous that the work of destruction should proceed. The tale of what followed we need not recite at length. It has already been written in ruddy crimson on the clouds of heaven, and been read by the thronging thousands of the astonished city, in the unnatural glare which reddened the darkness of that terrific night. Encouraging each other with loud shouts, they rushed to the assault—shattered the windows, and battered furiously at the doors, the strength of which for nearly twenty minutes resisted the attack, but at length gave way, and left free access to the interior. Then came the plunder of the book depository and the scattering of its contents among the crowd; the flash of the lighted torch along the deserted aisles—the heaping of light combustibles on the speaker's forum, and firing the pile—the wrenching of the gas pipes from their places, and adding their quickly kindled current to the rising flames—the shout which greeted the outbursting conflagration, as it rolled upward along the walls, and roared and crackled in the fresh night breeze, while the motto of the beautiful Hall, "Virtue, Liberty and Independence," shone clearly for a moment in the dazzling light, and was then effaced for ever—the fiend-like cry which went upward as the roof fell in, a blazing ruin; and smouldering and blackened walls alone remained, in place of the costly and splendid edifice.

The fire companies with their engines had come early upon the ground, but not a drop of water was thrown upon the Hall, till its destruction was ensured beyond possibility of prevention. Till then, the firemen confined their efforts to preserving the surrounding buildings, and such of their number as were disposed to play upon the object of attack, were prevented from doing so by the mob.

On the morning of the 18th, at 8 o'clock, the members of the State Society agreeably to adjournment, met together by the ruins of the Hall. There, with the smoking walls above them, and traces of the destruction around them, they proceeded to their business. One of the Vice Presidents of

the Society, presided. A motion was made and carried to adjourn to Sandiford Hall, where the resolution was passed, authorising the publication of this address in the name of the Society. As the Hall was too small to contain even the members of the Society, and as at such a crisis, it was deemed important that our meetings, if held at all, should be public, and open to the community, the Society adjourned to meet at such time and place as the Executive Committee might decide upon hereafter. The Committees which had been appointed at a previous meeting were continued.

The foregoing is we feel assured a faithful presentation of the facts connected with this outrage. We now ask our fellow citizens, what action is required at the hands of free-men and lovers of order, and law? Men high in authority have manifested an unholy sympathy with the prejudices and passions of the mob—the chosen guardians of the public peace, have manifestly yielded to the popular clamor—and suffered their authority to be made the sport and ridicule of lawless men. Ought we to be—can we be, instrumental in retaining men in office, who have thus proved unworthy of their trust—and left the property of the citizens a prey to violence. Are not all who love right and approve just law and desire peace and good order, bound to withhold in every form, their support and their suffrages, from every applicant for public favor or official stations, who will not explicitly avow his disapprobation of the recent lawless proceedings, and his determination to uphold the supremacy of the law, and to maintain, so far as in him lies, without regard to the popularity or unpopularity of the right, or of its exercise, or its possessor, every right of every portion of the people?

We pause not now to notice in detail the many and gross calumnies against us which have been industriously circulated throughout this community. Suffice it for us to declare that of those which have reached our ears not one is warranted by un-exaggerated truth. The voice of that truth is now lost in the hurricane of popular tumult. But, we feel conscious that in the hour of reflection and calm consideration which must follow the present excitement,—when reason shall assert its prerogative over prejudice and passion,—that justice will be awarded us by all upon whose good opinion we place a value. Possessing our souls in patience we abide our time. Strong in our own integrity and uprightness in this matter, with unaccusing consciences, and, regretting only our lack of zeal and energy heretofore in the cause of holy liberty, we feel ourselves called by the events of the past week to renewed and more efficient efforts. Not in vain, we trust, has the persecution fallen upon us. Fresher and purer for its fiery baptism the cause lives in our hearts. We now know and feel our responsibilities. Called, even in our weakness, to stand forth as the asserters and defenders of freedom in the place and hour of her extremest peril,—woe unto us if we

falter through the fear of man! If, shrinking from a manifest call of duty, we yield up great PRINCIPLES a sacrifice to popular fury,—if to save life and property we offer up all that can make the one tolerable or the other useful, we commit a crime against God and humanity, which words cannot measure. Were we to yield a single principle at this crisis the voice of a world's execration would justly brand us as TRAITORS TO LIBERTY.

Citizens of Pennsylvania! your rights as well as ours have been violated in this dreadful outrage. The blow has been aimed at the universal rights of man! The sacrifice of a beautiful temple dedicated to liberty, and bearing the motto of our state, "VIRTUE, LIBERTY AND INDEPENDENCE," has been made to SOUTHERN SLAVERY—to a system whose advocates unblushingly declare that the laborer should *every where*, at the North as well as the South, in Pennsylvania as well as in Carolina, be made the *property of the employer and capitalist*. In the heart of your free city—within view of the Hall of Independence, whose spire and roof reddened in the flame of the sacrifice—the deed has been done,—and the shout which greeted the falling ruin was the shout of Slavery over the grave of Liberty. It was such as greeted the ear of the Russian despot over the dead corpses and smouldering ruins of conquered Warsaw—such as the Turkish tyrant heard amidst the ghastly horrors of Scio. We ask of you as men jealous of your own rights, and your own liberties, to reflect upon the inevitable consequences, which must follow the toleration of such an outrage. If you have studied the history of past republics, you have not yet to learn that the sacrifice of the rights of a part of the community, has ended in the enslavement of all. The rights of the individual have never been disregarded by any nation or people with impunity. It is an ordinance of Providence that, that community which violates its own principles for the purpose of depriving any of its members of their acknowledged rights, digs in so doing the grave of its own liberties. We appeal to you not for our own sakes, but for the sake of great principles whose preservation is as necessary to yourselves as to us. We ask you to look at the scenes which for the last few years have disgraced our country in the eyes of the world, and rendered insecure the rights of the citizen, all tending to one result—all having a common object—the suppression of free inquiry on a subject which of all others should be open to Freemen—the subject of Human Rights. Call to mind the presses destroyed—the churches broken open—the family altars profaned by violence—the bloody scenes of Alton and St. Louis—the scourging of a freeman in the streets of Nashville—the imprisonment of Crandall in our Nation's Capitol—the thousand mobs, in short, which have usurped the authority of law—justified and sustained by men of high influence, and virtually countenanced by the sworn guardians of the public weal. Look to the Halls of Legislation—to the thrice repeated violation of the Constitution of the United States by Congress itself—the denial of the right of petition—the infamous resolutions of Southern Legislatures addressed to those of the free states, calling for the enactment of laws forbidding under pains

and penalties all discussion on the subject of the rights of man! Are these matters of light importance? Are Pennsylvanians prepared to yield up their dearest rights to perpetuate a system which cannot live in connection with the free exercise of those rights—which shrinks from the light—which is safe only in darkness—which howls in agony at the first sunbeam of truth that touches it? Will they allow it to overstep its legal boundary and trample on the free institutions of Pennsylvania? To smite down the majesty of *our* law—to hunt after the lives of *our* citizens—to shake its bloody hands in defiance of *our* rights within sight of the Hall of Independence, and over the graves of Franklin and Rush and Morris?—No! The old spirit of Pennsylvania yet lives along her noble rivers—and the fastnesses of her mountains are still the homes of Liberty. To that spirit we appeal in confidence and in hope.

Our principles as abolitionists have often been proclaimed in the ear of the people, and may be known to all men. That they are wickedly misrepresented, and to a great extent misunderstood, is therefore not our fault. We deplore the fact, but know of no way to avoid its repetition. If an earnest and solemn reiteration of the truths we believe and seek to disseminate, can convince our fellow citizens of the sincerity of our belief and the singleness of our purpose, this shall not be wanting. But when it is demanded of us to relinquish principles which we believe to be founded in everlasting truth, and which have been embraced under a solemn sense of responsibility to our fellow men, our country, and our God, we dare not obey the call. Standing up, in the Divine Providence, between the living and the dead, we should be false to our trust if we abandoned our position. We would not willingly outrage public sentiment—but if a firm adherence to the True and the Right, and an untiring advocacy of the principles upon which rational liberty is based, call down the vengeance of the populace upon our heads, we throw the responsibility of violated law where it belongs—upon that corruption of the public heart which is the certain result of a departure from the political faith of the fathers of our land, and an unmanly subserviency to the Demon of American Slavery.

The existence and the inalienability of human rights, we believe and maintain. Is there moral treason in this? Were Thomas Jefferson and his compatriots guilty of treason when they declared that “all men are created equal, and endowed BY THEIR CREATOR with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, LIBERTY, and the pursuit of happiness?” Were the founders and the fathers of this commonwealth insane and fanatical when they acted out this great truth, the utterance of which has been as an earthquake to shake down the tyrant and the despot from their thrones? Is our Bill of Rights a splendid fiction, and were those who framed it fools? Perhaps it is too much to expect that amid the excitement of the present hour, men will look back to long-acknowledged truths with a willingness to perceive their importance, and act in accordance with them; but we are persuaded that when the tempest which is now raging, shall be overpast, as it soon will be, a recurrence to first

principles will show even to our present persecutors that we are right—that we have acted in accordance with the Constitution of our common land, and have violated no law, human or divine.

Constitutions and laws may protect, but they do not bestow HUMAN RIGHTS. These are incident to, and inseparable from human nature. They are the gift of God to man. They are indissolubly connected with our duties, and he who presumptuously interferes with one, does violence to the other. The will of our Heavenly Father has been manifested in their bestowal, and he, therefore, who attempts to wrest them away, tramples upon that will, and wars against God.

American Slavery does this. In robbing man of personal ownership, and branding him before earth and Heaven as a piece of mere merchandize, it at once degrades human nature, and insults Jehovah. Its claim upon man is an outrage upon his Maker. Its very existence is a sin against God, which should be immediately repented of, and for ever abandoned. The South, itself, admits that if our premise be correct, our conclusion is irresistible. But the slaveholder has taken the ground that slavery is not a sin. Here, then, we are at issue. All that we ask is a full and candid hearing before our country and the world, and we fear not for the result. For the wicked casuistry of some of our Northern moralists, who admit that slaveholding is in itself a sin, yet contend that its immediate abandonment would be a greater sin, we have less respect than for the bolder and more consistent course of those who contend that it is an institution of Divine appointment, baptized by the teachings of Christ, and recognised as sacred by the Apostles.

But it is objected that whatever be the moral complexion of slavery, separated from it as we are by geographical boundaries, we have nothing to do with it—that whatever may be the sufferings of the slave, or the pollutions of the system, it is no concern of ours. No concern of ours! As if we were not of woman born, and could not feel for human wo. As if we were not American citizens, jealous for the honor of our common country! As if slavery, with its hot and fetid breath, was not blighting and withering our dearest hopes and our fairest prospects—with iron foot trampling upon liberty in her own home; and, with hand of sacrilege, staining the altars of freedom with the blood of her murdered martyrs! As if we felt not the requirements of God bound upon our consciences, and responsibilities from Him laid upon us which we cannot shake off! American Slavery is a concern of ours; for we are American citizens. Our country is weakened in its mental, its moral, and its physical power, by the existence of slavery. This, alone, has rendered us a hissing and a bye-word among the nations of the earth. It is a stain upon our escutcheon—a plague-spot upon our national reputation. It is a sin, and a curse, and a shame; and we can cease to be partakers in the iniquity only by faithfully rebuking it, and laboring for its overthrow. That benevolence which is bounded by caste or complexion, is not the benevolence of Christ. The fellowship which would leave our neighbor in his sin unwarned, is a

fellowship abhorrent to God. "Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him," is an injunction of Holy Writ which it becomes us to obey. In obedience to it, and to the voice of humanity pleading for the trampled and the poor, we have labored for the redemption of the slave from his bonds, and our country from its deadliest curse. We have labored from a solemn conviction of duty. From the same conviction, deepened by the events of the past week, we shall continue to toil. If we are heretics, ours is a heresy which cannot be burned out of us by fire. With a calm reliance upon God for justice to our principles, our motives, and our measures, we shall go forward in the arduous work we have begun; not, indeed, as reckless bravers of public opinion, but as men fearing God rather than man, and having the assurance that our principles will ultimately triumph over violence and prejudice and error. We labor not for ourselves alone, but for the best and highest earthly interests of those whose hand is lifted against us—for our land and for the world—for the great interests of humanity universally.

It may be proper for us to notice one charge which has been urged against us, as furnishing an excuse for the violence of the mob. We are accused of allowing our colored fellow-citizens to sit without molestation in different parts of the saloon:—in other words, of having no particular place or gallery assigned to colored men and women. We freely admit this—we should have been false to our principles if we had refused to admit men of every sect, rank, and color, on terms of equality, to witness our proceedings. In so doing, we have but acted in accordance with the sentiments of the old fathers of Pennsylvania freedom, as expressed in the Emancipation act of 1780.

"It is not for us to inquire why, in the creation of mankind, the inhabitants of the several parts of the earth were distinguished by a difference in feature or complexion. It is sufficient to know that all are the work of an Almighty hand. We find in the distribution of the human species, that the most fertile as well as the most barren parts of the earth are inhabited by men of complexions different from ours, and from each other; from whence we may reasonably, as well as religiously infer, that he who placed them in their various situations, hath extended equally his care and protection to all, and that it becometh not us to counteract his mercies."—(*See Emancipation act of 1780.*)

It has been alleged too, that it is part of the design of abolitionists to promote intermarriages between the whites and colored people; and the false and absurd charge of advocating amalgamation, has been used perhaps more effectually than any other, in exciting and arraying against us, the passions, prejudice, and fury of the mob. This charge has been so often denied, and from its first presentation, has stood so entirely on the bare assertion of our calumniators, unsupported by proof, that nothing but its vociferous reiteration at the present time, and its injurious influence on the minds of the ignorant and misinformed, would induce us again to allude to it, as we now do, for the purpose of once more recording against it, our explicit denial. The real

amalgamators are not the abolitionists, but the slaveholders of the South,—what they falsely accuse us of *recommending* to be done with the sanctions of morality and law, *they* shamelessly *practise* under circumstances of the grossest immorality. Were all the slave children of the South to follow the condition of their fathers, a work of gradual emancipation would be going on, more rapidly, and slavery would be in greater danger of speedy annihilation, than many at the North imagine.

To one other accusation we will briefly allude. It has been currently reported, that one of the speakers at the Hall, pronounced Washington a thief and a robber. The assertion is utterly false. The only allusion made to Washington, during the whole course of the exercises, was one which was couched in terms of eulogy. He was mentioned as having enrolled his own name among the enemies of slavery, and with the solemnity of a dying testimony, in the form of a will, emancipating his slaves, to have set the seal of his condemnation upon the iniquitous system.

Such are our principles, and such the feelings that have impelled, and still impel us onward. We have no secret nor ulterior views. We shrink not from the scrutiny of our fellow-men. Nay, we invite that scrutiny. We court investigation, satisfied that it will result in the diffusion of truths which we hold dear, and the advancement of the cause of outraged humanity.

If it be inquired of us what course we mean to pursue in this time of trial, our answer is brief. We shall move onward in the right line of duty, persevering in the promulgation and defence of those righteous principles which we have ever upheld, confining ourselves, as we ever have done, to the exertion of moral power, and the use of peaceful means. We shall plead with renewed and still increasing energy, the cause of the down-trodden poor, acknowledging in our practice, as well as our words, the universal brotherhood of man, and that we *believe*, what almost all *profess*, that “all men are created equal” in rights, and that those rights are inalienable. We are well aware that the worldly-wise would recommend a temporising expediency—a pause in our exertions—a bending to the storm, till its fury be overpast. The rhetoric may be fine which enforces such counsel, with similes of the reed rising after the blast, and the rigid oak shivered and prostrated for its obstinacy; but the policy it recommends, we utterly repudiate. The yielding reed may rise, but it bends again at the next gust. Who would lean on it for support? Who would rely on it as a prop to his feeble steps? The pliancy which saves it, proves it not worth saving. No!—never let this supple plant which seeks safety by tamely bowing before violence, be the emblem of the Anti-Slavery cause or its advocates. Let them be rather like the rock-rooted oak which gathers fresh strength from its resistance to the tempest, and never bending till it breaks, continues to give support to those who recline against it, as long as it can

sustain itself. Are we told of the events of the past week, and warned of the future? Our answer is ready. Our fathers preferred the maintenance of their rights to the preservation of life itself,—and we should be degenerate sons indeed, if, when not our own rights alone, but those of the enslaved millions of our sinful land,—of the millions yet to be born to an inheritance of degradation and oppression, or of liberty and honor, according as we succeed or fail, are depending on the issue of our moral enterprise, we should tremble and falter, and shrink from the contest as soon as it waxes warm, and thickens with difficulty, and toil, and peril. Are we pointed to the smoking ruins of that beautiful Temple of Freedom, which we fondly hoped would long have echoed the noble and free sentiments of a Franklin, a Rush, a Benezet, a Lay, and as we look sadly on its early downfall, are we bidden to learn hence the fate of our own dwellings, if we persevere? Think not the intimation will drive us from our post. No! rather will we gather in handfuls, the yet warm ashes of the ruined edifice, and cast them toward heaven, that they may come down in boils and blains upon the monster Slavery, eating with caustic energy to his very vitals, and consuming his life-blood with what he had vainly deemed should be his nourishment. We shall go on then, calmly but firmly. Our work is too holy, too great, too intimately inwoven with all that we hold dear for ourselves, or value for our fellow-men, or desire for our posterity, to be lightly abandoned at the appearance of difficulty, or timidly given over at the approach of danger. We feel that God has called us to this work, and if it is his purpose that we should finish what we have begun, he can preserve us, though it be as in the lion's den, or the seven-fold heated furnace;—that he will deliver us out of every danger, and uphold us by His free Spirit, until all is accomplished that he has given us to do. If he has otherwise ordained, and designs to permit the wicked to triumph for a little season, and the witnesses for his truth to be slain in the streets of our city, we shall have at least the satisfaction of reflecting that we fall in the post of duty, with our wounds in the breast and not the back; and that he whose work we are doing can raise up other laborers to reap the rich harvest whose seed we have sown, and whose growth our blood will have nourished.

Signed on behalf of the Society,

DANIEL NEALL,  
PETER WRIGHT,  
WM. M. SCOTT,  
JAMES WOOD,  
WM. HARNED,  
WM. A. GARRIGUES,

SAMUEL WEBB,  
LEWIS BEEBE,  
ABM. L. PENNOCK,  
JOSEPH M. TRUMAN,  
LEWIS C. GUNN.

Executive Committee.

*Philadelphia, May 22d, 1838.*